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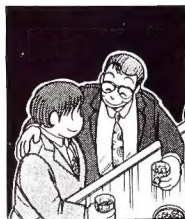
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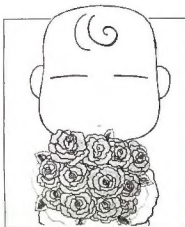
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Mangajin is a made-up word combining *manga* ("comics/cartoons") and *jin* ("person/people"). It sounds almost like the English word "magazine" as rendered in Japanese—*magajin*. All of the Japanese manga in *Mangajin* were created in Japan, by Japanese cartoonists, for Japanese readers.

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MANGAJIN

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Publisher's Note

It was quite an honor to receive two invitations to speak, first at the University of Michigan's Center for Japanese Studies on Jan. 12 and then at a Manga Symposium being held at Georgetown University on Jan. 28. You probably won't get this issue until after Jan. 12, so let me elaborate a little about the event at Georgetown.

It is sponsored by the University Department of Chinese and Japanese, in cooperation with Japan Forum, Kodansha International, and The Japan Information & Cultural Center at the Embassy of Japan. Among others, Frederik Schodt (author of *Manga! Manga!* and several other books on Japan), and manga artist Hirokane Kenshi (creator of *Kachō Shima Kōsaku* and a number of other hit manga) will speak. The event is free, so if you will be in the D.C. area, please join us. (See page 36 for more details.)

What delights me about both these events is that they confirm one of our basic beliefs: manga can provide valuable insights into Japan and the Japanese and are a legitimate subject of interest even for an educated, sophisticated audience.

The fact still remains that manga is a mass medium, and a lot of garbage inevitably comes out with the good stuff. In fact, one of our big jobs at *Mangajin* is selecting material that stands to some extent on its own merit.

For my part of the symposium, I plan to look at some of the fantasies that shape manga stories, especially business manga stories, and examine how they might affect your view of Japanese people. I love to destroy/debunk conventional wisdom and stereotypes, so if that's your thing, come check it out.

Vaughan P. Simmons



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Letters

Letters to the Editor

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Getting personal

Over the last year or so I have noticed that the classifieds have drifted from "I want a pen pal" to "I want a wife/girlfriend... send a picture..." I'm all for international romance but it seems out of place in your good magazine.

CARLOS CANACHO
Ehime-ken, Japan

We have also noted the transformation you mention, with some amusement. Since Mangajin is a journal of pop culture, and since these personal ads are a kind of pop culture in their own right, we have decided to allow them to continue for the time being. We are, however, now charging a fee for these ads to eliminate all but the most fervent.

Job jitters

Your article "Teaching in Japan: the Glory Days are Over," in *Mangajin* No. 40, scares me a great deal. It sounds like it is nearly impossible to get a teaching job in Japan. Is it truly this way? I am currently attending Syracuse University, learning Japanese and trying to get an ESL teaching degree. Have I wasted my time majoring in Japanese and teaching for the last year and a half?

GREGG LALKA
Syracuse, NY

The point of the article was not that the market for English teaching jobs has disappeared in Japan, but that it has become more competitive. While it was once easy to get a teaching job without a degree or previous experience, times have changed. In other words, English teaching has become like any other job: being qualified for the posi-

tion is key, and it sounds like you are on the right track.

Kimba vs. Simba

I'd be really interested in your covering the *Lion King* story. One part is the strange goings-on at Disney, where they say that the *Lion King* is completely original and that any similarities to *Jungle Taitai* are just a coincidence. That anyone could believe that the similarities in the lions' names, for example, are "unavoidable coincidences" strains the imagination.

But perhaps that part of the story is more American culture than Japanese. Perhaps the Japanese culture side of the story is the way that people in Japan are handling the "coincidence." As some newspaper articles have indicated, the Japanese say such things as that Tezuka would be pleased to have influenced a Disney film, that protesting would be unfriendly, and so on. I can't help but believe that if Tezuka Productions were Disney, the case would have been in court long ago. Doesn't this whole thing say something about the Japanese?

STEPHANIE TOMIYASU
Yokohama

[We asked Frederik Schodt, author of Manga! Manga! The World of Japanese Comics, to reply:] Disney's public assertion—that its hundreds of production staff members had never even heard of the late Tezuka Osamu or his work—is preposterous. There are several scenes and character designs in The Lion King which are undoubtedly inspired by, if not borrowed from, Tezuka's "Janguru Taitai" ("Jungle Emperor"—known in the US as "Kimba, the White Lion"). Having some knowledge of how animators work, I am convinced that some of them used the Japanese manga and tapes of the animated series as a primary reference. (Since the animation was widely broadcast on US television in the mid-60s, some of the staff certainly grew up watching the show.) That aside, I'm willing to grant that The Lion King is an original work because it has a very different story line from

(continued on page 34)



Stick 'em up

My son Aaron is four years old and attends Suika Education, a pre-school taught only in Japanese, where most of the children attending come directly from Japan to live in the USA. I specifically sent Aaron to this preschool to perfect his Japanese grammar by speaking every day only in Japanese. One day I was helping him to take off his shirt for a bath and he told me, "*Hanzai to iwanakucha.*" I asked him what "*hanzai*" is, and he said it means to put your hands up. When the children go swimming at school, his teacher Emisensei lines up the children and makes them all say this word. They then put their hands up so she can help them to remove their shirts to change for swimming. I had never heard this word, so you can imagine my shock when I looked it up in the dictionary and found out it means "criminal." I could not fathom why such a fine school would require four-year-old children to say "criminal" and put their hands up in the air, so the next day I confronted his teacher and we had a good laugh. She said the word the children say is "*hanzai*," a famous Japanese cheer, not "*hanzai*!" So children can make language bloopers, too. Unfortunately, I was the embarrassed one, not Aaron.

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Innovative uses of the Japanese language



おさるのもんきち Osaru no Monkichi Monkichi The Monkey

Contrary to all appearances, this box painted in primary colors and graced by a sweet little cartoon monkey does not contain candy or crayons. No, it is a package of condoms, from—who else?—Sanrio, the people who brought you Hello Kitty.

Osaru no Monkichi (“Monkichi the Monkey”), the brand name of these playful prophylactics, is a bilingual play on words. *Saru* (猿) is the Japanese word for “monkey” (the “o” is honorific), and the *monki* in *Monkichi* (the monkey’s name—male names ending in *kichi* were once very common) is the Japanese pronunciation of the English word “monkey.” Monkichi is also a reference to a monkey cartoon character named Monkichi that was popular in Japan about fifteen years ago. Monkichi products were marketed heavily in the US as well as Japan.

Monkichi may look cute and playful, but when it comes to safe sex, he doesn’t monkey around. *Mamotte kudasaru?* (まもってくださる?, “Will you protect me?”) he inquires, showing his deep sense of responsibility as well as his gift for wordplay. *Kudasaru*, of course, contains the word *saru*.

(*Kudasaru*, lit. “confer/bestow,” is used with *-te* forms of verbs to give the meaning “do . . . for me/us.” *Kudasai*, which combines with the *-te* forms of verbs to mean “Please . . .,” is a more familiar form of this verb.)

Thanx to: Rolf Ernst

襟～人 Eriito The Elite

Japan’s economic prosperity can be largely attributed to its millions of fearless corporate warriors; diligent, hard-working men who show up for work early every morning in neat blue suits and starched white shirts, ready to devote another long day to company, country, and climbing the ladder of success.

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The word *erito*, from the English word “elite,” is one of Japan’s many *gairaigo* (外来語, “foreign loan words”), and thus is usually written in katakana. Here it is written in kanji to make a play on words. The kanji used for *eri* (襟) means “collar,” the katakana long mark elongates it (*erito*), and 人 (read *hito*, *jin*, *nin*, or, as in this case, *to*) means “person.” Put it all together, and you have “collar person.”

But the fun doesn’t end there. As it is written on the package, parts of the kanji character for *eri* (襟) have been stylized to form the hiragana characters *eri* (えり). So the word *erito* can be read in two ways: 襟～人 and えり～人.



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From the Asahi Shinbun (朝日新聞)

Banners at Top:

行革 (short for 行政改革)

Gyōkaku (Gyōsei kaikaku)

(administration reform)

Administrative Reform

やさしい

Yasashii

gentle

Kind and Gentle

Panels On Castle Wall:

自 (short for 自民党)

Ji (Jimin-tō)

(free/liberal democracy party)

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) New Pioneers Party

さ (short for さきがけ)

Sa (Sakigake)

(pioneer/harbinger)

社 (short for 社会党)

Sha (Shakai-tō)

(society party)

Social Democratic Party of Japan (SDJP)

Banner on Ozawa's back:

新進党

Shinshin-tō

new progress/advance party

New Frontier Party

Banner in Kaifu's hand:

行革 (short for 行政改革)

Gyōkaku (Gyōsei kaikaku)

(administration reform)

Administrative Reform

Banners on Ground:

税 (short for 税制改革)

Zei (Zeisei kaikaku)

(tax system reform)

Tax System Reform

民主 (short for 民主主義)

Minshu (Minshushugi)

(democracy/democratism)

Democratization

Caption:

旗印 敵と違う新しいものはないか?

Hata-jirushi: Teki to chigau atarashii mono wa nai ka?

banner enemy from diff't new thing as for not exist (!)

Banner: Isn't there a new thing different from (those of our) opponents?

Isn't there any slogan that hasn't been taken by one of our opponents?

(Artist) 小島 功

Kojima Ko

- the full name of the Jimin-tō is Jiyū Minshu-tō (自由民主党), lit. "free/liberal democracy party," but it is almost always referred to as the Jimin-tō.
- teki to chigau ("[it] is different from the enemy") modifies atarashii mono, and wa marks the whole phrase (teki to chigau atarashii mono) as the topic → "as for a new thing that is different from the enemy[s]."

Things change fast in Japanese politics these days—or do they? Since the breakup of the powerful LDP in mid-1993, a remarkable number of political parties have blossomed—many sporting the character for “new” (新) in their hopeful-sounding names—and numerous coalitions have formed and dissolved. Yet surprisingly little has really changed. In fact, one might be moved to think, as the artist of this December 12 cartoon seems to, that it's all a lot of fluff and rhetoric.

The most recent addition to the roster of parties is the New Frontier Party, led by Ozawa Ichirō and Kaifu Toshiki, both LDP leaders-turned-reformers (Ozawa following the LDP's breakup and Kaifu following its alliance with the SDPJ). The newest party brings together many of those who supported the coalition governments of 1993 and 1994 that were supposed to



旗印 敵と違う新しいものはないか?

小島 功

have changed the face of Japanese politics. Having failed to institute any real change, and then having lost control of the government to an LDP/SDPJ coalition, the “reformers” are now regrouping under a new banner to make another bid for power.

However, as the cartoon makes clear, with so many parties all making the same promises, Kaifu (on the left) and Ozawa (on the right) are having a hard time finding a banner to call their own. Indeed, the “administrative reform” banner in Kaifu’s hand is already hanging on top of the castle wall.

The setting of this cartoon in the *Sengoku Jidai* (戦国時代, “Warring States” period, 1467-1568), a time of constant political strife and turmoil, emphasizes the turbulence of present-day politics. It also, perhaps, alludes to the fact that the more things change, the more they stay the same.

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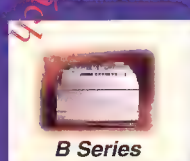
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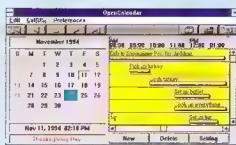


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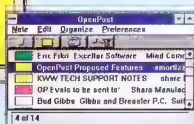
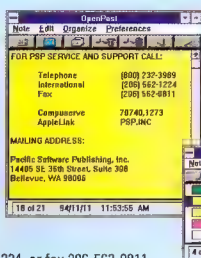
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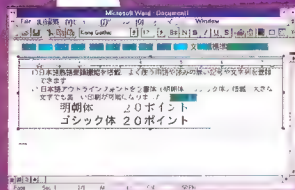
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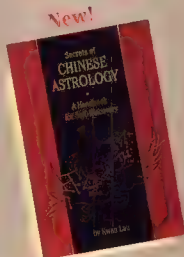
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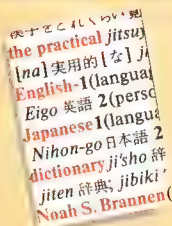


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The best ads reach out and grab their audience. This is true anywhere in the world. How they do it, however, varies from country to country.

Below, Fred Perry introduces some ads that were a big hit in Japan, and some that should never have left the storyboard. In examining these successes and failures, we learn more than how to sell a product in Japan; we get an inside look at the spirit of the Japanese people.



by Fred Perry

Necessity is the mother of great ads. In modern, consumer societies, the intense competition to sell products compels firms to pour massive amounts of money into the coffers of advertising agencies—which compete, in turn, to create succinct and powerful messages that will capture the attention of tired, harried, and increasingly skeptical consumers.

In Japan, the sums poured into advertising comprise about two percent of the GNP, putting the country among the top three spenders on advertising in the world along with the US and Great Britain. This vast amount of money is devoted mainly to newspaper ads and TV commercials, which between them account for well over 70 percent of total annual advertising expenditures; the rest goes into such media as weekly magazines, radio, and outdoor and transportation advertising.

Newspapers were the first large, modern advertising medium in Japan, where several national dailies boast circulations as high as five million. Unlike in the US, virtually every household receives a paper, so it is a particularly powerful medium for advertising. Most newspaper ads are black and white; however, new color printing technology has brought some color ads to Japan's millions of newspaper devotees.

In the late 1950s Japan's television broadcasting industry

sprang to life. In only a few years, it was possible to get at least NHK, the "BBC of Japan," and one other local station anywhere in the country. Nowadays, although cable television is still relatively underdeveloped, Japanese TV watchers have plenty of viewing options; there are currently about 130 regional stations operating in the country, and Tokyo alone boasts three satellites. Industry regulations allow for six minutes of commercials for every hour of broadcast time; in actual fact, a given hour, depending upon the time of day, may contain much more than the nominal limit. This density of TV advertising (or "clutter," as it is called in the industry) and the short duration of commercials—most are only 15 seconds long—mean that great skill is required to attract the attention of viewers.

More than 300 advertising agencies compete for this attention, but the industry is dominated by ten full-service agencies at the top. These are led by Dentsu (電通), a multi-billion dollar company—the largest ad agency in the world—with subsidiaries and cooperative ventures that span the globe. Dentsu and the other large Japanese agencies maintain massive research operations to explore consumer lifestyles and attitudes, reactions to new products, and often reactions to advertising as well, both before and after exposure.

• reach out = 手を差し伸べる / (人々に) 呼び掛ける *te o sashinoberu/hitobito ni yobikakeru* • devotees = 愛読者 *ファン aidokushafan* • boast = 、持っている / 誇る *-o motte-iru/hokoru* • density = 密度 *mitsudo*

The main target of these efforts is the housewife, the primary consumer and the unquestioned manager of household finances. Although the majority of Japanese families now own at least one car, in the dense metropolitan areas where most people live, the average housewife still shops daily on foot. From two to six o'clock in the afternoon, Japan's 15,000 or so shopping arcades burgeon with these domestic overseers, many with one or more small children in tow. The typical shopping arcade is actually a set of streets leading up to a local train station (there are about 5,000 train stations in the country), lined with all the major types of retail outlets—drug stores, vegetable stores, bakeries, supermarkets, clothing boutiques, etc. It is here where the end results of all the efforts poured into advertising in Japan are seen.

Research tells us that media weight, repetition and various creative techniques all play a part in advertising success, but in Japan, where communication is generally more indirect and affective than in the West, clever copy and appealing visuals are often the key to an effective ad. This points to one of the most basic truths in advertising—that to be successful, advertising in any country must resonate with the communication style, perceptions, and sensibilities of the people at whom they are aimed. In other words, ads that fail in Japan neglect to take the unique views and values of the Japanese into account, whereas the most successful ads appeal to, and therefore reflect, the particular "spirit" of the Japanese people—their *kokumin-sei* (国民性).

Below, a selection of recent ads are described and analyzed in terms of their success in reflecting Japanese *kokumin-sei*. Ads created with Japanese perceptions and values in mind have benefited accordingly, gaining quick popularity among the populace as well as critical acclaim. Ads that run counter to the Japanese spirit have, in a word, bombed.

Among those ads that never stood a chance in Japan was one television com-

mercial showing a husky, bare-chested man carrying a huge bag of coffee up the gangway of a ship, with the claim that "real" coffee beans mean good coffee. This type of approach succeeds in the US, where coffee is, among other things, the hearty stuff of rugged, salt-of-the-earth type individuals. In Japan, coffee is more about atmosphere than it is about an invigorating brown liquid. The Japanese drink coffee out of beautiful, usually dainty cups in clean, genteel surroundings with a bit of ceremony attached. Viewers said the commercial had a "hot, dusty and rough" look, which was a long way from this type of sensitivity.

Another failed attempt at a TV commercial showed duck hunters consuming an alcoholic beverage in a blind while shooting at ducks flying overhead. Whereas the average American has a sort of innate appreciation for the gritty, masculine values portrayed in this ad, most Japanese see little more than a gross and barbaric display. Guns are not part of Japanese life, hunting is not an especially popular pastime, and though Japanese do not hesitate to eat meat, their sensibilities dictate that the meat be presented in a neat and delicate manner. Not surprisingly, viewers of this ad claimed to be put off by the "unnecessary cruelty" to small birds.

Successful commercials teach us more than failures. Below are four examples of award-winning ads that impressed critics with their creativity and, perhaps more important, their ability to touch a sympathetic chord among viewers.

"We're just I-o-o-o-king . . ."

A popular recent TV commercial shows three nicely dressed, middle-aged women ("nice middies"): a made-in-Japan English word for attractive, middle-aged women excitedly sorting through racks and counters of clothes in an expensive-looking retail clothing store. A male clerk approaches, but is politely, and somewhat gleefully, rebuffed with the words: "We're just I-o-o-o-king!" (見てるだけ～, *miteru dake*—). A fe-

Nissen aims at a new breed of shoppers

In frame one, eager sales clerks look on as the women rejoice over their "finds":



In frame two, the women take their leave:



"Check it out at the store, and buy it at home."

(*Mise de shirabete, uchi de kau.*)

In frame three, the clerks wonder what hit them:



"Nissen: catalog shopping"
(*Katarogu shoppingu no Nissen*)

• burgeon = 急に膨らむ *kyo ni fukurumu* • domestic overseers = 家事の監督者 *kaji no kantokusha* • with ~ in tow = …をき連れて *...o hikit surete*
• resonate = 反響する *han ei suru* • take ~ into account = …を考慮に入れる *...o koryo ni ireru* • run counter = 反する / 相容れない *hansuru/ai irenai*
• salt-of-the-earth = 地の塩 / 堅実な人 *chi no shio/kenjitsu-na shomin* • invigorating = 元気づける *genkizukeru* • innate = 本来の *seirai no*



**JR
Tōkai
tries to
make
travel-
ers stay
home**

"Maybe it's cooler to really know Kyoto than to sort of know Paris or Los Angeles . . ."

(Pari ya Rosu ni chotto kuwashii yori Kyōto ni un to kuwashii hō ga kakko ii ka mo shirenai na)

male clerk approaches and gets the same response. It becomes clear as the commercial ends that the three "customers" intend to order from Nissen, one of Japan's largest mail order houses; they have come to the store simply to see what some of the items they want look like. The commercial ends with the two bewildered clerks staring after the "nice middle" invaders.

Personal appearance is extremely important in Japan, and women, especially, want to look good. This once meant sparing no expense on designer clothes and bags, but with the recent bursting of the economic "bubble," it is now as fashionable to be a thrifty and well-informed consumer as it is to appear smart and stylish. One result of this trend is that mail order has begun to grow rapidly and the quality of mail-order merchandise has improved. This commercial appeals to the dual wishes of the 90s' woman both to look good and to save money, and makes a big point of the fact that it's no longer unfashionable to shop by catalog—in fact, mail order is "in." This is a crucial point in Japan, where people, and women in particular, give new meaning to the word "trendy."

Maybe it's cooler to know Kyoto . . .

A large poster plastered above the windows of Japan's commuter trains advertises JR Tōkai (JR 東海, Central Japan Railway Company) with a tranquil shot of Kyoto's famous Kiyomizu temple. The setting sun peeks out from behind the wooden frame of the temple, while below, the city of Kyoto fills the natural basin formed by the surrounding mountains. The copy reads: "Maybe it's cooler to really know Kyoto than to sort of know Paris or Los Angeles."

JR Tōkai, a railroad and travel company, is aiming this ad primarily at Japanese youth, who have much more money and time on their hands than their parents ever did, and apparently feel compelled to spend a large portion of each vacationing overseas. This has become the fashionable thing to do, but JR Tōkai is attempting to convince the younger generation that it's just as cool—in fact, more cool—to know your own country. By spending more time in Kyoto, the ad

implies, you will impress your friends with your knowledge, you will be supporting your country by knowing its history, and you will be getting in touch with your roots. In short, the ad appeals to one's pride as a Japanese, and despite an ever-increasing internationalism, the Japanese continue to hold on to a strong sense of uniqueness as a race and culture; consequently, appeals to national pride tend to elicit a strong, emotional response from young as well as old.

Incidentally, the JR Tōkai poster provides a good example of how Japanese advertising tends to eschew excessive copy, relying instead on high quality, high impact illustrations. Just as gestures and implication often convey more meaning in a Japanese conversation than spoken words, visuals tend to carry more of the load in Japanese advertising than wordy efforts to convince.

Getting in touch with your life . . .

This prize-winning Apple Computer TV commercial shows a middle-aged Japanese man, coffee cup in hand, staring down at the screen of his computer. He calls out to various family members, trying to find out who has been touching his Mac. All protest their innocence, his wife adding, "I haven't known a thing about you these past five years." The camera swings around to reveal the computer's screen, on which, we discover, someone has scrawled the word "Workaholic!" (*shigoto-mushi*, literally "work-bug"). An off-screen voice says, "Getting in touch with your life . . . Apple Computer."

The salaryman's complete dedication to his work, and consequent estrangement from his family, is a dominant theme of life in Japan. Most working men put in hours that the average American worker cannot conceive of, and many, as a consequence, know their co-workers better than their own children. The Apple commercial treats this theme with light humor while attempting to sell the strong visual-related features of Apple computers using an indirect approach. Without the benefit of explicit explanation, the viewer is left to make the connection between an Apple computer and a solution to his perceptions of estrangement.

• thrifty = 儉約家 *ken'yakaka* no • tranquil = 安らかな / 静かな *yasuraka-na/shizuka-na* • elicit = 誘い出す *sasoidasu/hikidasu* • eschew = 避ける *sakeru* • estrangement = 疎遠 *soen/sogai* • conceive of = 想像する *sōzō suru* • explicit = 明らかな / はっきりした *meikai/haakken shita*

Apple Computer shows a slice of life



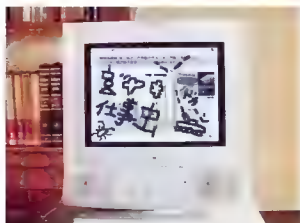
Husband: "Hunh? ... Who messed with my Mac?"

(Otto: N? ... Dare da? Makku ijitta no.)



Wife: "I don't know. I haven't known a thing about you these past five years."

(Tsuma: Shiranai wa, watashi. Kono gonengan anata no koto nanka nanimo shiranai wa.)



Screen: Workaholic

(Shigoto-mushi)

Narration: "Getting in touch with your life ... Apple Computer."

(Jinsei to kankei shitai, Appuru Konpvūta desu.)

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This type of symbolic "shorthand" is present to some extent in all advertising by its nature, but it is especially common in Japan where the majority of commercials are 30 seconds or less (many are 15 seconds and some are only five seconds long, partially due to the high cost of air time in Japan). Heavy use of visuals and an impressionistic approach are used, in part, as solutions to the time limitations on content.

There's a great artist inside . . .

Fuji Xerox's print ad series for its "A color" digital color copiers exemplifies the use of "humorous over-statement" to convey product superiority. Like all makers of high-tech products, Fuji was

faced with the necessity of somehow communicating that its new products are significantly different and better than its market-leading products of the past. The ads show a schematic, hollowed out, bigger-than-life copier, open on the side. One version shows one of Japan's most famous living painters, Okamoto Tarō, sitting inside the copier, palette in hand, with the copy line: "There's an incredible artist inside." Another version features a well-known cameraman, with the text: "There's a superbly skilled cameraman inside."

Raised in a tradition that places tremendous value on beauty and refinement, the Japanese, as a culture, are second to none in aesthetic sensibility—

Some ads are so clever or funny or visually pleasing that they transcend the boundaries of culture. This ad for Kiribai's Disposable Hand Warmers (pocket-size chemically-activated heating packs), 1993 winner of a Silver Lion Award at the Cannes International Advertising Festival, is one such example. In it, two Buddhist monks are performing their ritual prayers on a cold, snowy morning—to all appearances, maintaining the aura of strict discipline that Buddhist monks are supposed to have. On closer inspection, however . . .



The two monks (chanting):

"Winter is cold, cold, cold, . . .
My head is cold, cold, cold, . . ."
(Fuyu wa samui, samui, samui, . . .
Atama samui, samui, samui, . . .)

Narration:

"Kiribai's New Hand Warmer: The self-adhesive disposable pocket warmer is now available."

(Haru taipu demashita,
Kiribai tsukai-sute kaitō
Nyū Hando Uōma)



• exemplifies = 例を示す *rei o shimesu* • hollowed out = 中をくり抜いた *naka o kurinitita*
• transcend = 超越する *chōetsu suru*

Fuji Xerox's skilled copiers

XEROX



Acolor

"There's an incredible artist inside."

(Naka ni wa, monosugoi ōchisuto ga haitte imasu.)

making it no easy task to sell a color copier with strong claims of visual accuracy and rich, life-like color. Thus, the ads borrow on the widely acknowledged skills of famous artists and cameramen, using a humor-buffered approach, to make strong product claims without using long-winded technical explanations.

This series, like the Apple Computer commercial, shows the extent to which Japanese advertisers rely on the ability of the viewer to intuit an implied message, once again reflecting the subtle, indirect mode of communication favored in Japan.

Social anthropologists spend much of their time analyzing the artifacts of the social groupings they study. One of Japan's greatest scholars of the Japanese and their culture, Minami Hiroshi,

based one of his first books (*The Psychology of the Japanese*) on an analysis of such "cultural artifacts" as early post-war Japanese literature, popular songs, and traditional and still popular Japanese writings on morals and on how to live "successfully."

The postwar growth of Japan's advertising industry has provided students of the culture with yet another rich and revealing source of material about Japanese perceptions, values and modes of communication. Advertising should not be overlooked as an important way to get to know Japan, its people and their *kokumin-sei*.

Fred Perry has spent the past 38 years in Japan, working in advertising, market research, and consumer and industrial consulting.

• aesthetic sensibility = 審美眼 *shinbigan* • intuit = 直感する *chokkan suru*

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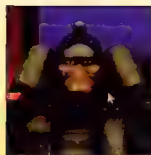
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Kodansha's Romanized Japanese-English Dictionary

[Timothy Vance, Kodansha International, 1993, 666 pp., \$28]

This dictionary was adapted for use by native English speakers from one of Kodansha's popular Japanese dictionaries for junior high school students. (No explanation is provided for why they chose a junior high dictionary rather than one for adults.) Some of the changes made include explanations of especially troublesome cultural terms, an expanded selection of example sentences, and several appendices dealing with aspects of Japanese grammar.

Both in format and content, this dictionary is almost ideal for beginning to intermediate students of Japanese. All of the 16,000 main entries are provided first in romanized form, followed by standard written Japanese. Copious example sentences are provided, given in both romaji and standard written Japanese. Created by a native English speaker, the example sentences and usage notes tend to be both natural-sounding and useful, and often contain in-line usage advice concerning issues of honorific speech, etc.

This may be one of the most visually pleasing dictionaries available, with good-sized print, nicely bolded entries and adequate spacing.

(Note: Kodansha has published an abridged version of this dictionary under the name **Kodansha's Pocket Romanized Japanese-English Dictionary**, 1994, 452 pp., \$12.00)

SAMPLE ENTRY:

natsukashii 懐かしい *nostalgia-inducing, longed-for, dear old*
 〃 Ane wa tokidoki natsukashii gakusei-jidai o omoidasu
 姉は時々懐かしい学生時代を思い出す。
*Whenever I look at my graduation photo-
 graphs, I recall my dear old student
 days.*

Basic Japanese-English Dictionary

[Bonjinsha/Oxford, 1986, 957 pp., \$17.95]

With slightly over 2,800 entries, the scope of this dictionary is rather limited. However, because the editors have not attempted to cram in as many entries as possible, the size of the print and the spacing of this dictionary make it one of the easiest to read.

In the preface, the editors assert that they wished to create a dictionary that would be easy to use for beginning students of Japanese throughout the world. Based on this premise, they created versions in several languages, including this English-language edition. The result of this multi-lingual publication goal is a slightly unusual format, not necessarily ideal for the typical dictionary user. Each page contains two columns of print—one with the Japanese word, Japanese examples sentences and the romanization for these sentences, the other giving

(continued on page 46)

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thing of a miracle in that it allows them to actually read a Japanese text for content, without being thrown off course by every unfamiliar word. This way, students can concentrate on the grammar and structure of the Japanese text. It also provides a good way for readers to increase their vocabulary.

While Mikan's ability to simplify Japanese texts is noteworthy, the texts themselves are also a very important part of this equation. Mikan includes two texts: *A Primer on the Japanese Economy* by Hirata Yasuo, and collected short stories of Atoda Takashi. Students who use Mikan to increase their Japanese vocabulary and reading comprehension will find that they learn more than they bargained for. The economics primer is thoughtful and well written, and Atoda's stories are humorous and broaden the reader's understanding of modern Japanese culture. Sentius will soon be offering more 'content-ware' modules which will appeal to all levels of Japanese students, and are planning to provide support for other platforms besides Macintosh.

Mikan offers a personal dictionary which provides a relational database function that allows users to compile and categorize vocabulary lists according to themes such as economics, the environment, and food and drink. Mikan is a good way for students of the Japanese language to boost their language ability and confidence at the same time. While the current content-ware may be too ambitious for those just beginning the language, students of the intermediate to advanced level (and beyond)

should find it a truly enjoyable product to use.

Mikan will run on any Macintosh with KanjiTalk 7.1 or the Japanese Language Kit.

1 + 1 = 3?

Both Mikan and the advanced version of KanjiWorks sell for \$149. Although it is not immediately apparent from their advertisements, Mikan and KanjiWorks are far from competing products, and in fact, they should probably both be 'required-reading' for serious students of Japanese. They offer a strong symbiosis: KanjiWorks providing the kanji lookup and learning functions, and Mikan supplying the chance to practice reading Japanese in a 'safe environment.' A strong English-Japanese/Japanese-English computer dictionary would create an unbeatable trio for those using their Macintosh computers to supplement classroom study. We'll see what we can find.

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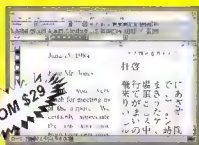
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Freud, Buddhism, and Karaoke

A 20th-century language experience

by Harvey Segalove, MD, MPH

Lulled to sleep by the constant purr of the 757 inch-ing toward Osaka, I had the same dream that started this whole adventure several weeks earlier: standing peacefully in front of a Buddhist temple in Japan, I was suddenly surrounded by hordes of microphone-wielding, white-gloved Japanese "elevator" girls, demanding some kind of speech from me, and horror of horrors, I found myself to be completely MUTE!!

Now, having nothing to say (in English) is not generally a problem of mine. I am a 40-year-old San Francisco-based psychiatrist who works daily with the severely mentally ill—a group of folks with whom one absolutely needs to be rather verbally quick and adept. But after having forgotten too much of what I learned ten years ago in a summer intensive Japanese class, I certainly didn't feel I could give a speech in Japanese to anyone, let alone to dozens of immaculately groomed department store employees in front of a holy place of worship.

I had been thinking about returning to Japan to improve my language skills ever since I began reading *Mangajin* (and usually "cheating" by just looking at the cartoon frames, skipping the Japanese, and going straight to the English translations). I suppose it doesn't require years of psychoanalysis to interpret the dream!

This dream was, however, a kind of wake-up call: here was the answer, right in the pages of your favorite *Mangajin*—Eurocentres was beckoning me to fulfill a fantasy I'd been entertaining all these years.

Landing at the sleek new Osaka airport, the echoes of my mid-air thoughts still lingering in my mind, I wondered if my slipshod Japanese would get me and my bags to Kanazawa without major difficulties. This was the first of many anxieties to be proven



unfounded, as the gracious woman at the information booth explained everything I needed to know (in embarrassingly perfect English) to set me on my way.

I was met at the Kanazawa train station by my host family father who whisked me off to my new home. He spoke naturally and kindly, but my rusty memory was only capable, at the time, of understanding very little. Welcomed to the house with a chorus of greetings, I was immediately treated to a sumptuous dinner of sushi, clear soup, and a variety of small dishes. The family's Canon Wordtank always close by, it still amazes me how well we communicated based more on gestures and goodwill than words.

What a busy (and I think typical) family! Everyone worked six days a week in various capacities, yet still found time to help me with my homework and conversation. In fact, all of my needs were more than taken care of, graciously and generously.

To get to school I rode the host family bicycle for 45 minutes every morning. I had never thought that my trip to Japan was going to be good for anything but my mind; however between the healthy diet and exercise of bicycling, I am sure I have added a few months to my life. In any case, with everyone travelling on the "wrong" side of the road, the morning commute proved to be an adventure in itself. Let's just say I made several "acquaintances" along the way.

Having learned some Japanese in the past, I was anxious that I would not fit well into the level of any of the classes. Once again, NOT TO WORRY! The Eurocentres' staff gave each of the new students a written exam and oral interview, after which they care-

fully considered our abilities and placed us in the appropriate learning environment. And what a rich environment it was! My class had a total of five students with three teachers for just our group. This allowed for a tremendous flexibility and customization of the learning program to accommodate our particular needs and wishes. Having three teachers also meant being exposed to different styles of instruction and manners of speech. Since none of the students were even from the same country, we couldn't resort to speaking any other language than Japanese in which to communicate.

Our instructors coordinated the myriad of teaching methods well, maintaining a constant pace with little time for daydreaming. I felt challenged but not pressured, pushed but not lost. I felt my progress in leaps and bounds, with a regular test of my newfound skills at the evening dinner table with my host family. By the end of the course I could even understand the game show on the TV whose main attraction was various actors throwing pies at each other (well, the nonverbal cues in the show were obviously a giveaway to the content of the dialogue).

The biggest dilemma came each day at 1 PM when classes ended. Would this be a day to study at the Eurocentres' computers or borrow a new book from the library? Or was it time to visit one of the many museums nearby? Or perhaps a stroll through one of the most revered gardens in all of Japan, literally next to our classrooms? Maybe a bike ride through the old sections of the town known for geisha houses and typical historic architecture? A visit to the famous fresh vegetable and fish marketplace where Japanese have been known to travel hundreds of miles to purchase the local fresh seafood? Shopping for lacquerware in the department store with my favorite elevator girls? Maybe the optional kanji class, or the school excursions to learn about flower arranging, tea ceremony, ink painting, Japanese cooking . . . or a lazy afternoon drinking coffee at Mr. Donut?

I had another dream curled up on my futon one evening during a heavy thunderstorm toward the end of my stay in Japan. Cranes were crowding the sky flapping their long wings with a flourish. I was ceremoniously dressed, playing *taiko* drums in a noisy parade. One of these fine birds delivered a middle-aged, grey-bearded, cigar-carrying man strangely reminiscent of Freud directly before me. He bowed and then began to sing "I Left My Heart in San Francisco." I returned the bow and thanked him. In Japanese.



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JACK SEWARD'S

OUTRAGEOUS JAPANESE

The Japanese generally strive for surface harmony and try to avoid antagonistic confrontations when possible. As a result, they do not generate verbal vitriol in the quantity or variety that can be attributed to

some other nationalities. But this is not to suggest that they are without their resources. As you will see, the Japanese can be inventive users of invective that is both vivid and injurious.

Continuing our series of excerpts from the book *Outrageous Japanese*, here is:

Using Living Creatures as Tools of Defamation, Part 3

Cows

As a field to plow for derisive commentary, cows offer little and can almost be ignored, except for one example:

牛の涎のよう
ushi no yodare no yō
“unending/something that drags on”
(lit., “like a cow’s saliva”)

牧師の説教は牛の涎のようでした。
Bokushi no sekkō wa ushi no yodare no yō deshita.
“The preacher’s sermon seemed like it would go on forever.”

Cats

In most cultures, except perhaps that of ancient Egypt, and to a lesser degree, present-day England, *neko* (猫, house cats) have often received short shrift. Japan is no exception.

- this comes from felines’ habit of covering up their business with dirt when they’re finished.

猫を被る
neko o kaburu
“pretend to be innocent/be hypocritical”
(lit., “to put on the cat”)

猫に小判
neko ni koban
“cast pearls before swine” (lit., “gold coins to cats”)

猫の目のように変わりやすい
neko no me no yō ni kawari-yasui
“extremely fickle”
(lit., “changeable as a cat’s eyes”)

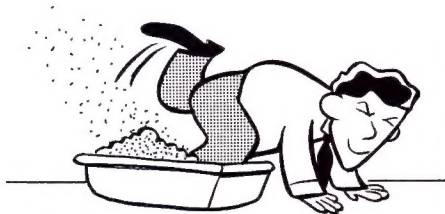
Although it is not really an insult, *neko* is a diminutive colloquialism used to refer to those ladies of the arts called geisha. *Neko o ireru* (猫を入れる, “bring in a cat”) means to call in a geisha. Possibly this originated in the use of cat skin for the surface of the shamisen that geisha often strummed.

Other Felines

If I go out and get sozzled, you can use this expression to describe me:

虎になる
tora ni naru
“get blind drunk”
(lit., “become a tiger”)

If the gendarmes collar me, they may take me to a *tora-bako* (虎箱), or drunk tank (lit., “tiger box”). Such “tigers” can be



猫ばば
neko-baba
“embezzlement” (lit., “feline feces”)

The material in this column is excerpted from the book *Outrageous Japanese*, by Jack Seward, Charles E. Tuttle, Inc., Tokyo, Japan. MANGAJIN has added Japanese kanji and kana, as well as grammar and vocabulary notes.

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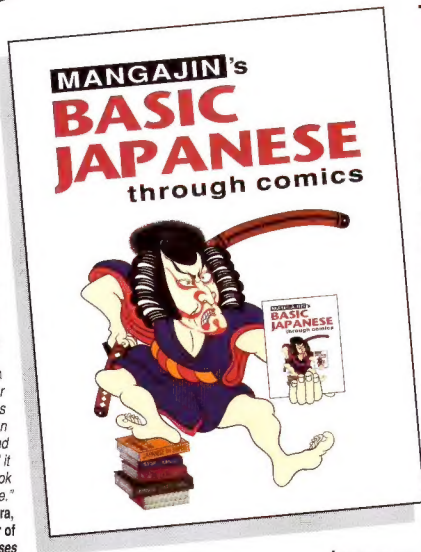
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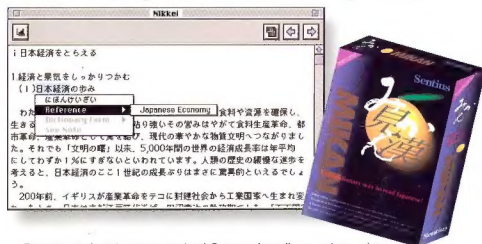
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